



## 2010 SUMMIT ON HEALTH, NUTRITION AND OBESITY: ACTIONS FOR HEALTHY LIVING

# ELECTROLYTE REPLACEMENT BEVERAGES: ELIMINATE ELECTROLYTE REPLACEMENT BEVERAGES FROM CALIFORNIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**“I want to take what was discussed at the Summit and turn our state goals into action that will attack obesity on every level and create a healthy foundation for California’s future.”** (Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, 2010 Summit On Health, Nutrition And Obesity, 2/24/10)

### **Action:**

Senate Bill 1255 (Padilla), sponsored by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, has been introduced to eliminate electrolyte replacement beverages (ERBs), commonly known as sports drinks, from being sold during the day in public middle and high schools by July 1, 2011.

### **Background:**

Based on research revealing sugar sweetened beverages (SSBs) as the single largest contributor to calorie intake in the country, Governor Schwarzenegger in 2005 signed a bill banning the sale of most sugar sweetened beverages, primarily soda, from California’s public schools. The bill contained an exception, however, allowing the sale of electrolyte replacement beverages, usually referred to as sports drinks, in public middle and high schools.

Designed to be consumed only after long periods of physical activity, ERBs have become a common sugar sweetened beverage for California students. Recent research indicates eight of the top 10 beverages sold a la carte in California’s public high schools are electrolyte replacement beverages. And while traditional carbonated SSBs such as soda are losing market share, ERBs are showing significant growth in the marketplace.

Whether a sports drink or a soda, sugar sweetened beverages contribute significantly to the obesity epidemic. Scientific studies show that the consumption of sugar sweetened beverages is associated with weight gain, diabetes, and obesity. The scientific evidence linking SSBs with weight gain is stronger than for any other food category, and some studies conclude that for children, each extra can or glass of a sugar sweetened beverage consumed per day can increase their chance of becoming obese by as much as 60 percent. In California, the rates of obesity are higher among adolescents who drink sugar sweetened beverages than among those who do not.

### **Success Stories:**

Recognizing the need to provide healthy beverage options to students, some schools in California have already eliminated electrolyte replacement beverages and replaced them with healthier alternatives. The San Francisco, Oakland, and Berkeley Unified School Districts, for example, have banned electrolyte replacement beverages from their middle and high schools and sell water and other healthy beverages instead. And in the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District, the after-school program at John Adams Middle School provides healthy beverages like water and juice instead of sugar sweetened beverages.